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ABSTRACT

Based on the view that more male role models are needed for young children and that there would be pedagogical benefits to having greater numbers of male early childhood teachers, this study examined female teachers' perceptions of barriers to men entering early childhood education (ECE) and their recommendations for recruiting males into ECE positions. Participating in the study were 46 female teachers in grades preschool through 2 in 3 Michigan counties. Teachers were asked to respond on a Likert scale to statements regarding males' decision to teach young children, benefits for male early childhood educators, and societal attitudes toward male teachers of young children. The findings indicated that respondents thought that salaries were inadequate to recruit males to or retain males in early childhood positions. Respondents believed that men's decision to enter the field was influenced by same gender role models and prior experience with young children. They thought that men would be discouraged by low numbers of male colleagues, but that male ECE teachers feel accepted by parents and the educational community. Respondents agreed that males must act differently in their interactions with young children and that they are more likely to avoid ECE because of the risk of sexual abuse allegations. They agreed that media campaigns appealing to masculine and nurturing aspects of ECE would help to recruit men teachers and that ECE teacher preparation programs need to actively recruit men. (The survey is appended. Contains 41 references.) (KB)

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE RECRUITMENT OF MALE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS: THE FEMALE VIEWPOINT

by

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to examine the female perspective of the perceived barriers to men entering career positions in early childhood education as well as the strategies in which districts and administrators can implement to recruit and retain men in the early childhood profession. The study surveys female teachers in early childhood classrooms in Ionia, Kent, and Ottawa counties. Reported in this study are the opinions and experiences of these teachers. The literature review includes research regarding male teachers in the early childhood profession. Questions addressed in this study include: why men choose early childhood education as a career, what effect male educators have on the career choice of male early childhood teachers, and the influence current and future earnings have on the choice by males to remain or leave early childhood education. A discussion of the quantitative methodology in which a Likert based scale was implemented in obtaining the survey data, as well as the findings of the data analysis are included. Recommendations are made for educators in order to help recruit and retain males in early childhood education.

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CHAPTER ONE

PROBLEM AND PURPOSE

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Representation of male teachers in early childhood education is considerably low in relation to the overall teaching field. According to Klecker and Loadman, the national teaching population is currently 72% female and 28% male. Klecker and Loadman further break this down stating that 2% of early childhood teachers and 14.6% of elementary teachers are male (1999).

Traditionally early childhood has been considered a female oriented profession. Several studies state that men are underrepresented because of a low salary, perceived lack of status, fear of child abuse allegations, and scarcity of male camaraderie in the field (Klecker and Loadman, 1999). However, according to a recent study (Ballema et al., 1999) four conclusions were made regarding male educator's views on recruiting male early childhood educators:

1. The small number of men in the field of early childhood education does not prevent men who are interested in the field from becoming teachers of young children.
2. Men who teach young children were not influenced to do so by having a male and female teacher that they perceived as a role model.
3. Administrators do not discourage men from teaching young children.
4. Poor salaries are not enough to cause male teachers of young children to seek employment in a more lucrative field.

In view of these conclusions, what factors would contribute to a higher male representation in early childhood?

The purpose of this study is to examine female recommendations for the recruitment of males into early childhood education positions, and to discover recruitment techniques districts may use to recruit, employ, and then retain males as teachers. Furthermore, this study serves to bring light to providing suggestions and techniques in the area of recruitment and retention of men in early childhood education.

Rationale

With the increase of predominately single-female-parent households, there is a vast need for male role models. Currently most male role models for children are not easily accessible to children, such as actors or athletes. A male teacher in early childhood could be a key link in filling this gap for all children. Male early childhood teachers even feel that role modeling is a crucial component of their position (Montecinos and Nielsen, 1997). In turn male students may see the teaching profession as a viable career choice for them due to male role models.

In addition, males in the early childhood setting can provide a different perspective on classroom arrangement, curriculum, and pedagogy (Barnehage, 1998). For example, the traditional early childhood classroom offers not only dramatic play, dolls, and a kitchen but; a work bench area, tools, and racetracks. Including male perspectives may allow the children more opportunity for gender free experiences. Children with more options increase their schema by drawing on a variety of

experiences in their environment. These increased opportunities allow for more productive life-long learners which in turn benefits society as a whole. Therefore, the increase of male early childhood education teachers could impact children and society.

A survey of female early childhood educators could provide the missing link in increasing the recruitment of male candidates in early childhood.

Background of the Study

Teaching was a male dominated profession in the early part of our country's history. In the 1800's there was no such thing as a woman teacher. Young men entered into the profession as a stepping stone to other professions. As the school day grew longer, more demands were placed on the teacher, driving young men to chose other professions. In addition, the pay remained the same as the amount of teaching time increased. This opened up the opportunity for woman to enter the teaching profession. (Clifford, 1989).

As the number of male teachers in early childhood education declines, so too does the opportunity for young growing children to interact with men in their daily lives. To further compound this situation, the family structure in today's changing culture points to an increase in the number of single parent and/or non-traditional families, a departure from the nuclear family of past generations. Men in many families are not part of the daily equation. It would seem accurate to suggest that men play an important and distinctive role in the lives of young children, yet the opportunities for these experiences are evaporating (Robinson, 1988).

Research has shown that both genders have unique contributions to make in the development of children. Men and women think and act differently from one another and children thrive on these differences. Some traits that men seem to bring out in children are independence, competition, communication for information exchange, and concern about being respected. Children need a male role model in their lives to help develop these skills. Having both a male and female role model and the coordination of the approaches are valuable when working with children. (Thevenin, 1993).

The number of men choosing careers in early childhood education is dwindling, causing an examination of the barriers which men might perceive to employment in the field. Among several inhibitors would be salary and benefits afforded to early childhood educators. It would appear difficult to support a family on lesser wages and benefits than non-education career alternatives would provide. Citing poor salaries as a factor, seventy percent of male teachers of young children have left their field (Robinson, 1979). As the sole-income for himself or a family, a male would have second thoughts before accepting and remaining in a low-paying position when other options existed for financially rewarding employment (Neugebauer, 1994).

Because male early childhood teachers are so unique, the question of their career motives becomes suspect. Images of men working in nurturing positions raises questions of gender identification and sexual orientation. Fears arise among employers and within the parent community as to issues of child molestation when

young children are left in the care of male teachers. Another fear is that the level of play between male teachers and young children could elevate to unsafe roughhousing which might cause injury to the child. The implication of this thinking is that men are not to be trusted with young children (Neugebauer, 1994).

With so few men working with young children, male children have few role models to serve as examples in their career decisions. If the possibility of male teachers of young children is not part of their picture, male children miss the opportunity to join this profession. Within the community of male teachers there is much isolation for this very reason. Often a male teacher will work solely with women. It is through networking and conferences that male teachers can find support in dealing with their unique role (Neugebauer, 1994).

Men working in a field where the salary and benefits are low, in a climate of mistrust and suspicion, and where support is limited, find little esteem in this career choice. The response to other more satisfying employment opportunities is enticing (Seifert, 1984).

Once employers have examined their own attitudes and moved beyond the cultural stereotypes suggested by the presence of male teachers in an early childhood program, recruitment of male teachers becomes challenging. Employers must find unique ways to advertise for male teachers by communicating with universities their need to hire male teachers and by using media targeted at male populations. Shying away from nurturing words to describe this type of work and by including descriptors

such as physically active, recreational, outdoors, fun, and socially important should help to attract male teachers to a particular job (Cunningham, 1999).

Some school districts have found creative solutions to recruiting and retaining males as teachers. Forgiving college loans, tuition reimbursement, housing grants, and bonuses for signing contracts are just a few ways districts have increased incentives for male teachers (Education Weekly on the Web, 1999).

Once recruited, male and female teachers need to experience an equitable work environment for males to feel part of the staff. Therefore, caution needs to be taken in that male teachers who are employed in early childhood settings do not fall into stereotypical roles such as lifting heavy objects, trouble-shooting for the child care center van, taking out the trash, and finding themselves outdoors more often than their female counterparts. Teachers in general, but male teachers in particular, need to be protected from false accusations of child abuse. If male teachers feel safe and protected in their work environments, there is an increased likelihood that they will stay working in that environment (Neugebauer, 1994).

Above all, men need to be valued in an educational work environment. The images of nurturing male teachers, productive experiences with volunteering fathers, and positive models of males through print and displays, will serve to foster images in young children of the importance of men in their lives. This study is a continuation of a research project conducted during the fall, 1999 semester. The reader is referred to Recommendations for Improving the Recruitment of Male Early Childhood Education Professionals (Ballema et al., 1999).

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine female recommendations for the recruitment of males into early childhood education positions, and to discover recruitment techniques districts may use to recruit, employ, and then retain males as teachers. Furthermore, this study serves to bring light to providing suggestions and techniques in the area of recruitment and retention of men in early childhood education.

Goals and Objectives

The goals of this project include:

- Study of the research and literature related to this topic.
- Design a survey instrument.
- Collection and analysis of data using the Likert Scale.
- Presentation of recommendations based on results.

Key Terms

Early childhood education programs: General education and special education public programs for students in infancy through second grade taught by certified teachers.

Likert Scale: A rating scale that consists of a series of attitude statements about some person, group, or thing. Respondents provide the extent to which they agree or disagree with each statement.

Survey: A questionnaire format sent out to educators and recorded by these researchers.

Limitations

- Non-random survey
- Limited resource publication and professional literature.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review will summarize the existing research and how it reflects the challenges male teachers in early childhood education face. Little national data is available regarding the gender of teachers working with young children. Although, 1987 and 1988 figures from the National Center for Education Statistics showed that 12.4 percent of the nation's roughly, 2 million full-time elementary school teachers were men (Cohen, 1990). The existing research is divided into three areas: (1) why there are so few men in early childhood education; (2) the importance of male teachers in early childhood education; and (3) possible strategies for recruiting and keeping male teachers in early childhood education.

Possible Reasons of Scarcity of Men In Early Childhood Education

There are very few male teachers of young children (Gong, 1997), and the challenge before us is to understand why. Since the Civil War, women have dominated elementary teaching positions. In most instances women were less costly to employ than their male counterparts. Gender stereotypes have led to the view that women would create a more nurturing environment than would men. Furthermore, it was believed that women teachers would provide a more upstanding moral example than would a male teacher (Montecinos & Nielsen, 1997). In general, women were viewed as more suitable than men were in the role as nurturer and teacher of young children (Hulsesbosch, 1992). Consequently, teaching at the elementary level became

stereotyped as women's work (Rury, 1989). Many parents and educators today still hold the belief that men cannot be as nurturing as women and thus would be ineffective in that role (Neugebauer, 1994).

Men who enter the field of education tend to take positions in the higher grades and in more academic subject areas (Clifford, 1989). Perhaps this stems from the misconception that early childhood education is easy and requires little knowledge (Benton-DeCorse & Vogtie, 1997). One study of educators found that many in the profession, especially men, associate teaching young children with a female virtue of a lack of ambition (Patrick et al., 1986). Therefore, men going into a traditionally female career such as early childhood education, are considered to be taking a step down in status (Seifert, 1984).

According to research, the few men who choose to enter the early childhood profession report an awkward relationship with their female colleagues (Fagot, 1981; Lee & Wolinsky, 1973). It is suggested that some women may feel threatened with men entering a traditionally female dominated profession. Men who teach young children often find themselves asked to perform traditionally male duties, such as carrying heavy objects and acting as the disciplinarian.

The lack of status associated with teaching young children and low pay are two of the main barriers that seem to prevent men from entering the early childhood field. When male teachers were surveyed as to what factors would keep them in their positions as teachers of young children, one half of them responded that higher salaries would help to do so (Robinson, 1988). Some men feel their salaries are not

enough to support their family and maintain the standard of living at the level at which they desire. One reason many men in education choose secondary positions over those in an elementary is that there are more coaching opportunities available which earn them more money, status, and respect (Gong, 1997). Alternative careers for men outside the field of education quite often pay substantially more than teaching jobs and therefore are many times more appealing career choices.

According to Seifert (1984), men typically evaluate their jobs according to their long-term career opportunities. Unfortunately, in education, opportunities for advancement are mostly limited to administrative positions which offer minimal increases in salary but do give men increased respect and status. Men in education tend to move into administrative positions more often than women (Siefert, 1984), and women tend to remain in the classroom longer (Sadker & Sadker, 1985). Some research supports the idea that men become frustrated with their role in the classroom much earlier and much more frequently than their female counterparts (Lortie, 1975).

Historically there has been a belief that men who entered the early childhood profession were homosexuals. Although this assumption is sometimes still made today, the main concern with men teaching young children is the fear of child abuse (Cohen, 1990). It is considered acceptable for women to have some physical contact with young children and for them to show affection to their students, but many people believe it is unacceptable for men to do so. Some administrators are reluctant to hire men for early childhood positions for fear of child abuse allegations. Men who teach

young children report they fear they cannot act the same way toward their students as their female counterparts in certain situations such as being alone with children or changing diapers. Many men feel they are viewed with suspicion by family, friends, and female co-workers simply because of their gender. According to Cohen (1990), "No one wants to take a job where they feel they are being scrutinized carefully because of their gender".

The assumption is made that men and women differ in basic characteristics and teaching styles that make a measurable difference in their effect on the children they teach (Gold & Reis, 1978). Many believe that women cannot teach boys as well as men and erroneously assume that men are more capable of handling active young boys. Recent research confirms that men and women treat young children similarly, regardless of gender (Brophy & Good, 1974).

Most men struggle with the initial decision to enter into an early childhood education program. Men who have chosen to become early childhood teachers have the perception of teaching as a "job suited to female, but not exclusively a woman's job." (Johnston et al., 1999). They feel that they can contribute to the learning environment despite the barriers that society places before male early childhood teachers.

A study by Montecinos and Nielsen (1997) found that 37% of female elementary education majors and 12% of male elementary education majors made their initial career decision when they themselves were in elementary school. More males stated that they made the decision to become early childhood teachers when

they were in high school and college. Such men stated that they initially entered college majoring in male dominated fields like business and the sciences only to change their majors after having positive experiences working with young children (Montecinos and Nielsen, 1999).

Male early childhood teachers are well aware that they are members of a minority group in education. Most men who enter the teaching profession are secure with their masculinity, though at times they have hidden self-doubts about "making the masculine grade" (Thornton, 1999). Finding support from their male peers helps to calm these fears. Males feel they miss out on collegial relationships with teachers like themselves. Male elementary teachers report lower job satisfaction ratings than female elementary teachers (Klecker & Loadman, 1999). This low job satisfaction may be due in part to the lack of social interaction between male and female teachers.

Importance of Men In Early Childhood Education

Men in early childhood education are thought to break traditional stereotypes about male careers. The idea that male teachers in early childhood education will provide children with a positive male role model is the main reason cited for encouraging men to enter early childhood education. The importance of men in the early childhood field has only been considered in the last thirty years or so. Prior to that, caring for preschool and kindergarten children had been considered woman's work, and consequently was off limits to men. Kaplan (as cited in Robinson, 1988) declared in his doctoral dissertation that men should not be asked to play nursemaid to young children. During the 1960s and 1970s, it became fashionable for men and

women to break old stereotypes, and the presence of men in early childhood was believed to augment sex typing, improve boys' school achievement, prevent children from thinking of school as a woman's world, and counteract the disintegration of the family (Robinson, 1988).

It is believed that recruiting men into early childhood education will combat sex role stereotypes by providing children with male models who not only model and reinforce traditionally feminine qualities but masculine ones as well (Robinson & Hobson, 1978). According to Clyde, this androgynous approach, blending both male and female behaviors into one personality, offers the young child a balanced perspective (Clyde, 1989). When a man comes into a classroom, it presents a balanced world of men and women. David Giveans, publisher of a journal focusing on parenting and fatherhood, said "children need to see teacher David mixing juice and bathing a child and teacher Mary out climbing a fence" (as cited in Cohen, 1990). One would not argue the point that female students need positive male role models just as much as do male students. Indeed, all children benefit from exposure to such men. Students of all races, genders, and socioeconomic backgrounds benefit from mentors (Shreffler, 1998). Having more men in the school simply would reflect the diversity of the world (as cited in Hirschman, 2000).

Despite the lack of evidence to support the idea that a male presence in early childhood education leads to a child's development of positive gender concepts and attitudes towards self, school, and life. Having men involved in early childhood education would allow children to see that men can be nurturing, loving, and

understanding (Riley et al., 1985). A popular argument also in support of male teachers is that children need to have a male role model during their early years of education, especially if they do not have a father or are brought up mainly by their mother (Farguhar, 1997). Many experts see signs that men are increasingly welcome in the field. There is a growing demand from parents for male teachers. Families want a male involved because they want their children to know that men can have nurturing roles (Galley, 2000). Not only can a male teacher serve as role model, mentor, teacher, and friend to his male students, he may often realize that he shares a kindred spirit with these youth. This bonding in itself can have the power to diminish, even eliminate the stereotype that America has fostered about women being the nurturing gender.

According to experts, a male teachers' presence provides some younger children with the models they need. "For children who don't have a father role model, a male teacher can be the central figure in their life. Kids need a balance, just like they need a mom and a dad," said Frances Schoonmaker, a professor of education at Teachers College, Columbia University, in New York City (Gong, 1997). However, research which has been undertaken to support these assertions does not shed any real light on the topic, mainly because the subjects have been too few, the variables too many, and most of the research has lacked a clear theoretical basis of child behavior and gender identification and development (Gold et al., 1977).

Although there is not much research to support it, the belief that men do make a difference in the lives of their early childhood students is felt by many people,

including male teachers. In a study of men in early childhood education done by Robinson, the men studied resisted being valued solely for their macho image and did not see their role as turning early childhood education into a man's world. Still, 95% of the men believed that, they could provide experiences for the children that they would otherwise miss having a female teacher (Robinson, 1988).

For male role models to provide maximum benefit for young children, the length of time they remain in their jobs is an important factor. Each year nearly a fifth of all teachers quit the profession, some after only five years or less in the classroom. When male teachers are constantly coming and going, it is difficult to establish stable male role models that children need but often never get at home (Robinson & Huffman, 1982). Unfortunately, it is questionable whether the average male in early childhood remains in his job long enough to have positive effects (Robinson and Huffman, 1982). Research done by various people, including Madsen, Sciarra, Brophy and Laosa, has shown that the brief time span of 6 weeks, 8 weeks, or one year has little or no positive effect on children (as cited in Robinson & Huffman, 1982). However, a study by Raines and his colleagues demonstrated that significant positive effects are achieved in children's gender identification with men after a two-year period in which they had male teachers (as cited in Robinson & Huffman, 1982). In one sample of male teachers followed for a two-year period, only 30% of them continued teaching young children while 70% had left the field (Robinson, 1979).

Strategies To Recruit And Maintain Men In Early Childhood Education

Male teachers are strategically positioned to help rebuild the kinds of stronger U.S. communities that can survive rapid social and demographic changes. Since there are few male teachers in early childhood, there are programs that have been specifically designed to recruit more men (Robinson, 1981). An example of this would be a program known as Project MODEL; this program trains black men to be special-education teachers for Elementary and preschool children. The program was created to counter the problem of the misplacement of minority children, particularly African-American boys in special-education classrooms. Black men can not only serve as role models for these boys but also understand their cultural differences in hopes that they will not be placed in special education for the wrong reasons. Programs like these offer scholarship incentives, housing, books, and monthly stipends, to ensure that the young men stay in the program (Basinger, 1999).

The literature suggests strategies to help recruit men to teach young children. One suggestion would be to have employers, trainers of educators, policy makers, and administrators join together and form a national coordinated effort to recruit male teachers into early childhood education. Universities have the opportunity to introduce more men to the early childhood field by placing male students with male cooperating teachers who can serve as role models. Galbraith (1992) suggests offering mentoring activities to male preservice teachers. Teacher preparation programs should work closely with high schools in their school-to-work programs so that male

students might have more opportunities to explore elementary teaching as a viable career option (Montecinos & Nielsen, 1997).

Advertising must be done in the right places in order to be effective in recruiting men. Those who advertise must target their efforts in areas around the community where men who may be interested in working in early childhood may congregate. For example, targeting advertising on college campuses, in recreation centers, in health clubs, and at sporting events has been shown to be effective (Neugebaurer, 1994). Advertisements should possibly contain reference to early childhood education as physically active and socially important work, and specifically mention men are encouraged to apply.

Mancus (as cited in Klecker, 1999) found through his research that male elementary teaching candidates reported that male more than female teachers influenced their views of teaching as a profession. Which means we need to get more male teachers as role models in those younger grades (Klecker, 1999). Having men involved in all aspects of early childhood may influence a male's career choice later on in life. Early childhood programs should develop programs which specifically reach out to fathers or significant male role figures (McBride, 1997). Research that was stimulated by the new interest in fathers suggests that fathers' involvement in their children's schools does make a difference in their children's education (Nord, 1998). A challenging aspect of teaching young children is teaching about a wide variety of fathers. Curriculum content should also identify males with regard to father's roles and career choices (Cunningham, 1994).

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The research suggests that men are intimidated by entering a profession where they will be the minority. According to Nelson and Sheppard, many men who are the only male on a staff of women experience feelings of isolation (as cited in Cunningham, 1999). If districts are truly committed to recruiting men, they need to express this commitment to hiring more than one man to candidates (Neugebaurer, 1994). Another way to provide a more comfortable environment for men, and in doing so provide students with male role models, is to strive to increase the participation of fathers in programming (Neugebaurer, 1994). Finally, but somewhat unrealistic, increasing the salaries paid to primary teachers would increase the number of men teaching young children and make the field more satisfactory for qualified men (Robinson & Huffman, 1982).

Although recruiting men to teach young children is problematic, once men enter the field it is equally difficult to retain them in this capacity. Cunningham (1999) believes that men will stay in an environment they feel is equitable, safe, values men, and supports them in personal and professional growth. Referring back to Project MODEL an advisory board was made up to help retain the men in the program. The board is made up of three black men who are educators and a fourth male, who is a judge, to serve as a mentor (Basinger, 1999). Assignment of tasks to men and women on staff should be fair and consider the needs and wants of the employee. Men should not be assigned stereotypical jobs of an athletic or mechanical nature. All teachers should be treated equally, regardless of gender, in addition Alan Berlin cautions against having a separate set of policies for men (Neugebauer, 1994).

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Many men feel they are but one false accusation away from having to leave a satisfying career working with young children, so it is very important to have policies that protect men and all staff from these types of situations (Cunningham, 1999). Male teachers of young children need help finding support in their chosen field. Men who care for children need to assemble to discuss issues confronting them, share their solutions and ideas, and gain support for their efforts (Neugebauer, 1994). Praise and encouragement are things that both men and women need in order to feel respected and appreciated in their role as educators. Offering and providing support to men in both their personal and professional development will cause them to feel more successful and content in their professions.

Perhaps the most important means of retaining men in the profession is to provide good working conditions. The most professionally committed teaching candidates, male and female, want to work in the best settings that offer high quality services and provide the best working conditions for staff (Neugebauer, 1994).

Limitations

This literature review was restricted by the limited amount of research that has been done that actually supports and gives reasons for why men should have careers in early childhood education.

Summary

Based on the review of the noted research, a summary of the important findings include:

1. Gender stereotyping was found to be a main reason for the lack of men in the field

of early childhood education.

2. Some men feel a lack of respect and status in teaching early childhood, and lower pay contributes to these feelings of inadequacy.
3. There is little opportunity for advancement in education for men, opposed to many opportunities in other fields. This ties in with men's feelings of self-worth.
4. Men fear allegations of student abuse charges, due in part to media hype.
5. Males working in early childhood education are viewed as important in the effort to break traditional stereotypes of men's work.
6. Male teachers allow children to see men as positive, caring role models, which some children are missing in their lives.
7. Even though there is not much research to support this, even men believed that because they were involved with children, they provided experiences their students would otherwise miss.
8. There is a need to keep men in the early childhood field and job for longer periods of time to promote stability and consistency for their students.
9. The image of education needs to change, stereotyping needs to be eliminated, and respect for the profession established.
10. Increased wages and better working conditions will help keep men in early childhood teaching positions.
11. Male teachers need support from fellow teachers, parents, and administrators to help them recognize their value and worth.
12. Early training and opportunities for male involvement with young children (in

high school and college) will help increase awareness, and acceptance of working with early childhood students.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY AND DATA RESULTS

Project Methodology

Forty-six Likert-based surveys (Appendix B) were given to female teachers of young children, grades pre-primary impaired through second grade, employed in the Cedar Springs Public Schools, Forest Hills Public School, Grand Rapids Public Schools, Hudsonville Public Schools, and the Ionia Intermediate School District. These non-random surveys were administered outside of the school setting and were collected from friends and associates teaching at this level. The survey provided the teachers the opportunity to offer their opinions regarding; male's decisions to become a teacher of young children, benefits for male early childhood educators, societal attitudes towards male teachers of young children, and their own reflections as a teacher in early childhood education. The survey allowed them to respond in four different ways using the Likert Scale: strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree.

DATA RESULTS

Demographics

The following information provides the demographics for the respondents (n=46), based on self-reported data:

Age of respondent:

20-25 = 6 or 13.1 percent

26-30 = 3 or 6.5 percent

31-35 = 4 or 8.7 percent

36-40 = 9 or 19.6 percent

41-45 = 6 or 13.1 percent

46-50 = 10 or 21.7 percent

50+ = 8 or 17.3 percent

Years of Teaching Experience:

1-5 years = 8 or 17.3 percent

6-10 years = 9 or 19.6 percent

11-15 years = 9 or 19.6 percent

16-20 years = 5 or 11.0 percent

21-25 years = 8 or 17.3 percent

26-30 years = 4 or 8.7 percent

30+ years = 3 or 6.5 percent

Years of teaching young children:

1-5 years = 11 or 24.0 percent

6-10 years = 9 or 19.6 percent

11-15 years = 7 or 15.2 percent

16-20 years = 7 or 15.2 percent

21-25 years = 6 or 13.1 percent

26-30 years = 3 or 6.5 percent

30+ years = 3 or 6.5 percent

Education Level:

BA/BS	=	16 or 34.8 percent
MA	=	30 or 65 .2 percent
Ed. Spec.	=	0 or 0.0 percent
Doctorate	=	0 or 0.0 percent

Formal Training in Early Childhood Education:

Yes	=	20 or 43.5 percent
No	=	26 or 56.5 percent

Number of Males in Building:

0	=	0 or 0.0 percent
1-2	=	21 or 45.6 percent
3-4	=	11 or 24.0 percent
5-6	=	13 or 28.2 percent
7-8	=	0 or 0.0 percent
9-10	=	1 or 2.2 percent
11-12	=	0 or 0.0 percent
13-14	=	0 or 0.0 percent
15-16	=	0 or 0.0 percent

Number of males in your building teaching young children:

0	=	14 or 30.4 percent
1-2	=	29 or 63.0 percent
3-4	=	2 or 4.4 percent

5-6 = 1 or 2.2 percent

7-8 = 0 or 0.0 percent

9-10 = 0 or 0.0 percent

11-12 = 0 or 0.0 percent

13-14 = 0 or 0.0 percent

15-16 = 0 or 0.0 percent

Number of females in your building teaching young children:

0 = 0 or 0.0 percent

1-2 = 2 or 4.2 percent

3-4 = 3 or 6.5 percent

5-6 = 3 or 6.5 percent

7-8 = 6 or 13.0 percent

9-10 = 11 or 24.0 percent

11-12 = 8 or 17.3 percent

13-14 = 4 or 8.7 percent

15-16 = 9 or 19.6 percent

School Type:

Urban = 15 or 32.6 percent

Suburban = 19 or 41.3 percent

Rural = 12 or 26.0 percent

School Districts Represented:

Cedar Springs = 7 or 15.2 percent

Forest Hills = 10 or 21.7 percent

Grand Rapids = 16 or 34.8 percent

Hudsonville = 9 or 19.6 percent

Ionia = 4 or 8.7 percent

SURVEY FORMAT

Frequencies and percentages were reported using a Likert Scale survey.

- SA = Strongly Agree
- A = Agree
- D = Disagree
- SD = Strongly Disagree
- NR = No Response
- O = Other

For example, reporting a response by using *22/73.3 indicates that 22 individuals or 73.3 percent of the total group made the selection.

1. **I believe the current wages of early childhood educators are adequate to recruit men into the profession.**

   SA= 2/4.4 A=10/21.7 D=24/52.2 SD=10/21.7

2. **Long-range salary projections influence males as to how long they intend to remain an early childhood teacher**.

   SA=9/19.6 A=31/67.3 D=6/13.1 SD=0/0.0

3. **Male early childhood teachers tend to move into a field outside education due to the potential for greater earnings.**

   SA=18/39.1 A=26/56.5 D=2/4.4 SD=0/0.0

4. **A male's decision to become an early childhood teacher is influenced by having a male elementary teacher who they perceived as a role model.**

   SA=2/4.4 A=26/56.5 D=18/39.1 SD=0.0

5. **A male's decision to become an early childhood teacher is influenced by having a female elementary teacher who they perceived as a role model.**

   SA=1/2.2 A=21/45.6 D=24/52.2 SD=0/0.0

6. **A male's decision to become an early childhood teacher is influenced by his experiences working with young children in another capacity.**

   SA=13/28.2 A=31/67.3 D=1/2.2 SD=0/0.0 NR=1/2.2

7. **A male's decision to become an early childhood teacher is influenced by having a family member or friend in the teaching profession.**

   SA=10/21.7 A=33/71.7 D=2/4.4 SD=0/0.0 NR=1/2.2

8. **A male's decision on a career in early childhood is made more difficult due to an awareness of the low numbers of men working in the field.**

   SA=10/21.7 A=27/58.6 D=8/17.3 SD=0/0.0 NR=1/2.2

9. **I feel parents are supportive and accepting of males in the early childhood profession.**

   SA=7/15.2 A=27/58.6 D=11/24.0 SD=1/2.2

10. **I feel the community as a whole is accepting of males in early childhood education.**

    SA=4/8.7 A=34/73.9 D=7/15.2 SD=1/2.2

11. **I feel society and our culture still question the motives of men who choose a career in early childhood education.**

    SA=5/10.9 A=21/45.6 D=16/34.8 SD=3/6.5 NR=1/2.2

12. **Males feel isolated as early childhood teachers with so few men in the profession.**

    SA=10/21.7 A=32/69.6 D=4/8.7 SD=0/0.0

13. **I feel males cannot act in the same manner as female coworkers in situations such as, being alone with children or displaying affection towards them.**

SA=12/26.0 A=25/54.4 D=7/15.2 SD=2/4.4

14. **The potential for accusations of sexual abuse of children in a male teacher's classroom may cause males to avoid early childhood education.**

SA=18/39.1 A=22/47.8 D=5/10.9 SD=1/2.2

15. **I feel school administrators attempt to dissuade males from teaching at the early childhood level.**

SA=1/2.2 A=10/21.7 D=29/63.0 SD=6/13.1

16. **Providing opportunities for young men to work with children would persuade more men to become early childhood teachers.**

SA=2/4.4 A=38/82.5 D=6/13.1 SD=0/0.0

17. **Providing men who enter the early childhood profession with signing bonuses would recruit more men into the profession.**

SA=1/2.2 A=30/65.2 D=12/26.0 SD=3/6.5

18. **Providing men who enter the early childhood profession with housing grants would recruit more men into the profession.**

SA=0/0.0 A=21/45.6 D=22/47.8 SD=3/6.5

19. **Forgiving college loans for men who enter the early childhood profession would recruit more men to teach young children.**

SA=1/2.2 A=28/60.9 D=12/26.0 SD=5/10.9

20. **Many men would be more likely to accept a position in early childhood if they were assured the school was committed to hiring more than one man.**

SA=6/13.1 A=26/56.5 D=12/26.0 SD=2/4.4

21. **Teacher education programs should promote programs that recruit men to teach young children.**

SA=12/26.0 A=26/56.5 D=8/17.3 SD=0/0.0

22. **Media campaigns, such as those used to recruit Big Brothers, would help recruit more men to become early childhood teachers.**

SA=9/19.6 A=31/67.3 D=6/13.1 SD=0/0.0

23. **Advertising which appeals to more "masculine" aspects of the early childhood profession would help recruit men to teach young children.**

SA=5/10.9 A=26/56.5 D=13/28.2 SD=1/2.2 NR=1/2.2

24. **Advertising which appeals to men's "nurturing instincts" would help recruit men to work in the early childhood profession.**

SA=3/6.5 A=31/67.3 D=10/21.7 SD=1/2.2 NR=1/2.2

Conclusions:

How do women feel about the need for recruitment of men in the early childhood profession? Female teachers of young children responded to the above survey questions and offered opinions upon the effectiveness of possible strategies that might be used to recruit and retain men into the early childhood field.

Conclusions that can be drawn from the data include the following:

- Women who teach early childhood education feel salaries are inadequate to recruit males.
- Women do not feel long-term salary projections are adequate to retain male early childhood teachers.

- Females believe that same gender role models influence a male's decision to enter the early childhood profession.
- A man's prior experience working with young children is influential in his decision to enter the early childhood profession.
- Males are more likely to enter into the early childhood profession if a family member or friend serves as a role model.
- Males are discouraged by low numbers of anticipated male colleagues.
- Most male early childhood teachers feel accepted by parents and the educational community.
- Society and our culture maintain negative stereotypes of men in the early childhood profession.
- Women feel males must act differently in their interactions and displays of affection with children.
- Males are more likely to avoid early childhood education due to the dangers of sexual abuse allegations.
- Increasing advertising or media campaigns to appeal to both "masculine" and "nurturing" aspects of the early childhood profession would help to recruit men to teach young child.
- Teacher preparation programs need to be designed to actively recruit men into the field of early childhood.
- Signing bonuses and forgiving college loans would be incentives for recruiting men into the early childhood profession.

Female early childhood educators feel that positive role models and early interaction with young children may influence men to enter the teaching profession. However there are several reasons men may be discouraged to enter the early childhood profession. First men are influenced by low salaries and low long-range salary projections, which may affect the length of time they remain teachers. In addition, the awareness of low numbers of men employed in the teaching field creates possible feelings of isolation. Finally, society as a whole questions the motives of men who enter into early childhood education. However, parents and community members are accepting and supportive of males in early childhood positions with whom they are familiar.

Respondents of the above survey indicated two areas with the potential to recruit and maintain men in early childhood. First, providing incentive opportunities such as signing bonuses or dismissing college loans. Also, utilizing media campaigns designed to promote nurturing and masculine aspects of the profession would present the positive impact men can have on children.

Recommendations:

Based on the above findings the following recommendations are made to those who recruit, educate, and have the best interests of children at heart:

- Actively work towards making teaching young children a respectable career choice for men. Providing children with opportunities to experience male and female teachers gives a well-rounded education.

- Provide positive interactions for young men and children through volunteer opportunities, tutoring, chaperoning, or assisting in the classroom.
- Provide opportunities and activities to facilitate an inclusive atmosphere in the workplace.
- Draw more males into the profession by showcasing the unique qualities of early childhood through local media campaigns.

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Appendix A

Date

Dear Early Childhood Educator,

We are a group of graduate students from Grand Valley State University who are involved in a research project which seeks to establish reasons for the under representation of male teachers in early childhood. The enclosed survey represents a key component of our study, and we need your help! **Your response to this survey is crucial to the success of our project!** We believe it is imperative to seek out the input of women who are teachers at the early childhood level, and to gain insight into some of the issues that face men considering a career in early childhood. Current research on this topic is limited; more input is needed from those such as yourself.

Completion of the enclosed survey should take no more that 5-10 minutes of your time. We strongly encourage your participation. Please take time to respond to the items and return the survey using the enclosed envelope. We would appreciate them at your earliest convenience, but need to receive them no later than Wednesday, February 23.

Your individual response to the survey will be confidential and will be reported as aggregate data. We will use a coding system to maintain your confidentiality and to assist us with follow-up with those who do not respond.

Participation in this survey is voluntary. If you have any questions about your rights in the study, you may contact the chair of Grand Valley Human Research Review Committee, Paul Huizenga at 616-895-2472.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Barnard
Lori Hovingh
Michele Nezwek
Deborah Pryor-Bayard
Jill Schmoldt
James Stevens
Wendy Sturrus
Susan Wabeke
Lorie Weaver

Appendix B

This survey is designed to investigate equitable teaching options in early childhood education (grades Pre-K, K, 1, and 2). Please respond to each of the statements by circling one of the following:

Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), or Strongly Disagree (SD).

Information About You: (Circle the correct response.)

Age:

20-25 26-30 31-35 36-40 41-45 46-50 50+

Years of Teaching Experience:

1-5 6-10 11-15 16-20 21-25 26-30 30+

Years Teaching Young Children:

1-5 6-10 11-15 16-20 21-25 26-30 30+

Education Level:

Bachelor of Arts/Science Masters Ed. Spec. Doctorate

Formal Training in Early Childhood Education:

Yes No

Number of Males in your building:

0 1-2 3-4 5-6 7-8 9-10 11-12 13-14 15-16

Number of males in your building teaching young children:

0 1-2 3-4 5-6 7-8 9-10 11-12 13-14 15-16

Number of females in your building teaching young children:

0 1-2 3-4 5-6 7-8 9-10 11-12 13-14 15-16

School Type:

Urban Suburban Rural

1. I believe the current wages of early childhood educators are adequate to recruit men into the profession.
   SA A D SD

2. Long-range salary projections influence males as to how long they intend to remain an early childhood teacher.
   SA A D SD

3. Male early childhood teachers tend to move into a field outside education due to the potential for greater earnings.
   SA A D SD

4. A male's decision to become an early childhood teacher is influenced by having a male elementary teacher who they perceived as a role model.
   SA A D SD

5. A male's decision to become an early childhood teacher is influenced by having a female elementary teacher who they perceived as a role model.
   SA A D SD

6. A male's decision to become an early childhood teacher is influenced by his experiences working with young children in another capacity.
   SA A D SD

7. A male's decision to become an early childhood teacher is influenced by having a family member or friend in the teaching profession.
   SA A D SD

8. A male's decision on a career in early childhood is made more difficult due to an awareness of the low numbers of men working in the field.
   SA A D SD

9. I feel parents are supportive and accepting of males in the early childhood profession.
   SA A D SD

10. I feel the community as a whole is accepting of males in early childhood education.
    SA A D SD

11. I feel society and our culture still question the motives of men who choose a career in early childhood education.
    SA A D SD

12. Males feel isolated as early childhood teachers with so few men in the profession.
SA A D SD

13. I feel males cannot act in the same manner as female coworkers in situations such as, being alone with children or displaying affection towards them.
SA A D SD

14. The potential for accusations of sexual abuse of children in a male teacher's classroom may cause males to avoid early childhood education.
SA A D SD

15. I feel school administrators attempt to dissuade males from teaching at the early childhood level.
SA A D SD

16. Providing opportunities for young men to work with children would persuade more men to become early childhood teachers.
SA A D SD

17. Providing men who enter the early childhood profession with signing bonuses would recruit more men into the profession.
SA A D SD

18. Providing men who enter the early childhood profession with housing grants would recruit more men into the profession.
SA A D SD

19. Forgiving college loans for men who enter the early childhood profession would recruit more men to teach young children.
SA A D SD

20. Many men would be more likely to accept a position in early childhood if they were assured the school was committed to hiring more than one man.
SA A D SD

21. Teacher education programs should promote programs that recruit men to teach young children.
SA A D SD

22. Media campaigns, such as those used to recruit Big Brothers, would help recruit more men to become early childhood teachers.
SA A D SD

23. Advertising which appeals to more "masculine" aspects of the early childhood profession would help recruit men to teach young children.

SA A D SD

24. Advertising which appeals to men's "nurturing instincts" would help recruit men to work in the early childhood profession.

SA A D SD

Appendix C

PERMISSION TO USE RESEARCH

Permission granted to Dr. Mack to use the survey results for additional research endeavors.

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
ED 695 DATA FORM

NAME: Cynthia Barnard

MAJOR: (Choose only 1)

____Ed Tech	____Ed Leadership	____Sec/Adult
____Elem. Ed	____G/T Ed	__X__ Early Child
____Elem. LD	____Sec LD	____SpEd PP
____CSAL	____Read/Lang. Arts	

TITLE: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE RECRUITMENT OF MALE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS: THE FEMALE VIEWPOINT

PAPER TYPE: (Choose only 1) **SEM/YR COMPLETED:** Winter, 2000

__X__ Project
____Thesis

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE OF APPROVAL _____

Using the ERIC thesaurus, choose as many descriptors (5-7 minimum) to describe the contents of your paper.

1. Education
2. Male Teachers
3. Early Childhood Education
4. Stereotypes
5. Perceptions of men
6. Recruitment
7. Teacher attitudes

ABSTRACT: This study examines the perceived barriers to men entering the early childhood profession, and recommendations of female teachers for the recruitment of males into early childhood teaching positions. It also examines strategies school districts may use to recruit, employ, and retain males as early childhood teachers.

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
ED 695 DATA FORM

NAME: Lori Hovingh

MAJOR: (Choose only 1)

____Ed Tech	____Ed Leadership	____Sec/Adult
____Elem. Ed	____G/T Ed	__X__ Early Child
____Elem. LD	____Sec LD	____SpEd PP
____CSAL	____Read/Lang. Arts	

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PAPER TYPE: (Choose only 1) **SEM/YR COMPLETED:** Winter, 2000

__X__ Project
____Thesis

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE OF APPROVAL [signature] Ph.D

Using the ERIC thesaurus, choose as many descriptors (5-7 minimum) to describe the contents of your paper.

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GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
ED 695 DATA FORM

NAME: Michele Nezwek

MAJOR: (Choose only 1)

____Ed Tech	____Ed Leadership	____Sec/Adult
____Elem. Ed	____G/T Ed	____Early Child
____Elem. LD	____Sec LD	__X__SpEd PP
____CSAL	____Read/Lang. Arts	

TITLE: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE RECRUITMENT OF MALE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS: THE FEMALE VIEWPOINT

PAPER TYPE: (Choose only 1) **SEM/YR COMPLETED:** Winter, 2000

__X__Project
____Thesis

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GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
ED 695 DATA FORM

NAME: Deborah Pryor-Bayard

MAJOR: (Choose only 1)

____Ed Tech	____Ed Leadership	____Sec/Adult
____Elem. Ed	____G/T Ed	____Early Child
____Elem. LD	____Sec LD	__X__ SpEd PP
____CSAL	____Read/Lang. Arts	

TITLE: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE RECRUITMENT OF MALE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS: THE FEMALE VIEWPOINT

PAPER TYPE: (Choose only 1) **SEM/YR COMPLETED:** Winter, 2000

__X__ Project
____Thesis

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE OF APPROVAL [signature], Ph.D

Using the ERIC thesaurus, choose as many descriptors (5-7 minimum) to describe the contents of your paper.

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GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
ED 695 DATA FORM

NAME: Jill Schmoldt

MAJOR: (Choose only 1)

____ Ed Tech	____ Ed Leadership	____ Sec/Adult
____ Elem. Ed	____ G/T Ed	____ Early Child
____ Elem. LD	____ Sec LD	__X__ SpEd PP
____ CSAL	____ Read/Lang. Arts	

TITLE: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE RECRUITMENT OF MALE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS: THE FEMALE VIEWPOINT

PAPER TYPE: (Choose only 1) **SEM/YR COMPLETED:** Winter, 2000

__X__ Project
____ Thesis

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE OF APPROVAL [signature]

Using the ERIC thesaurus, choose as many descriptors (5-7 minimum) to describe the contents of your paper.

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GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
ED 695 DATA FORM

NAME: James Stevens

MAJOR: (Choose only 1)

____ Ed Tech	____ Ed Leadership	____ Sec/Adult
____ Elem. Ed	____ G/T Ed	__X__ Early Child
____ Elem. LD	____ Sec LD	____ SpEd PP
____ CSAL	____ Read/Lang. Arts	

TITLE: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE RECRUITMENT OF MALE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS: THE FEMALE VIEWPOINT

PAPER TYPE: (Choose only 1) **SEM/YR COMPLETED:** Winter, 2000

__X__ Project
____ Thesis

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE OF APPROVAL _____

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GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
ED 695 DATA FORM

NAME: Wendy Sturrus

MAJOR: (Choose only 1)

___ Ed Tech	___ Ed Leadership	___ Sec/Adult
___ Elem. Ed	___ G/T Ed	X Early Child
___ Elem. LD	___ Sec LD	___ SpEd PP
___ CSAL	___ Read/Lang. Arts	

TITLE: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE RECRUITMENT OF MALE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS: THE FEMALE VIEWPOINT

PAPER TYPE: (Choose only 1) **SEM/YR COMPLETED:** Winter, 2000

X Project
___ Thesis

SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE OF APPROVAL [signature] Ph.D

Using the ERIC thesaurus, choose as many descriptors (5-7 minimum) to describe the contents of your paper.

1. Education
2. Male Teachers
3. Early Childhood Education
4. Stereotypes
5. Perceptions of men
6. Recruitment
7. Teacher attitudes

ABSTRACT: This study examines the perceived barriers to men entering the early childhood profession, and recommendations of female teachers for the recruitment of males into early childhood teaching positions. It also examines strategies school districts may use to recruit, employ, and retain males as early childhood teachers.

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NAME: Sue Wabeke

MAJOR: (Choose only 1)

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NAME: Lorie Weaver

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